

Judicial Guidance for Cases Involving Self-Represented Litigants: Bench Guides



The SRLN Administrative Office of the Courts Working Group has collected court system resources that provide guidance for judges for cases involving self-represented parties. Here is a selection of Bench Guides:

1. National: [*Handling Cases Involving Self-Represented Litigants: A National Bench Guide for Judges* \(2008\)](#)
2. Massachusetts: *Massachusetts Judicial Guidelines for Civil Hearings Involving Self-Represented Litigants* (April 2006). (Attached) This manual includes guidelines for interactions pre-hearing, during the hearing, and post-hearing. It also includes judicial commentary.
3. California: [*Handling Cases Involving Self-Represented Litigants: A Benchguide for Judicial Officers*](#) (January 2007, Updated 2019).

4. Delaware: *Delaware's Judicial Guidelines for Civil Hearings Involving Self-Represented Litigants* (2011). (Attached)
5. Illinois: *Self-Represented Litigants in Civil Matters: Suggested Best Practices and Relevant Court Rules* (October 2014). (Attached) Practical guidance for judges which includes checklists judges can use for explaining the trial process to self-represented litigants.
6. Kansas: *Judicial Guidelines Applicable to Civil Hearings Involving Self-Represented Litigants Including Commentary* (Proposed) (Attached)

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[Massachusetts Judicial Guidelines for Civil Hearings Involving Self-Represented Litigants.pdf](#)

[Delaware's Judicial Guidelines for Civil Hearings Involving Self-Represented Litigants.pdf](#)

[Illinois Self-Represented Litigants in Civil Matters Suggested Best Practices and Relevant Court Rules.pdf](#)

[Kansas Judicial Guidelines Applicable to Civil Hearings Involving Self-Represented Litigants Including Commentary.pdf](#)

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